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Items of Interest:

West Nile Virus. A potentially serious illness, experts believe MNV is established as a seasonal epidemic in North America that flares up during the summer season and continues into the fall months. People can develop WNV from mosquito bites. Symptoms include fever, headache, body aches and nausea. What can you do to prevent WNV? When outdoors, use insect repellent that contains DEET (N, N-diethyl-metatoluamide). Wearing long sleeved shirts and pants to cover skin can also aid in the prevention of a mosquito bite. Check around your home for possible mosquito breeding sites, such areas are places with standing water. To learn more about West Nile Virus, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm>.

Navy and Marine Corps Medical News

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Navy Medics Reach Out in Africa Annual Exercise Strengthens Cooperation Between United States and West Africa Nations

By U.S. Naval Forces Europe Public Affairs

NAPLES, Italy – More than 100 U.S. military medical and support members deployed to Garoua, Cameroon; and Libreville, Gabon; July 11 to begin this year's West African Training Cruise Medical Outreach Program.

This annual exercise conducted between the U.S. and various West African nations is designed to improve cooperation and interoperability between participating military medical personnel through joint training, scientific exchange, the interchange of medical procedures and humanitarian assistance to rural areas.

During the exercise, medical service units from Cameroon and Gabon will join U.S. Navy Sailors

from the Operational Health Support Unit Great Lakes to conduct medical training, execute mass casualty simulation, facilitate medical civic action opportunities and observe cultural exchanges.

This medical outreach program "gives the U.S. an opportunity to show its concern for the people of western Africa with exercises focusing on their health, well-being and AIDS prevention," said U.S. Navy Capt. Elisabeth Wolfe, mission commander for the program. "This is a very visible reminder of American commitment and goodwill to the region. Peacetime defense and security cooperation activities by our forces enhance regional cooperation and self-reliance, as well as demonstrating commitment and improving collective military capabilities."



SANTA RITA, Guam - Hospital Corpsmen Tagay Musaev and Michael Baber, assigned to Naval Hospital Guam treat victims of a simulated chemical attack, while Petty Officers William Moseley and Jeffrey Mau, standing, provide security during a Chemical, Ordnance, Biological, Radiological Tactical Response Team Exercise. U.S. Navy photo by Cmdr. Tino M. Arandela



DJIBOUTI, Horn of Africa –

Cmdr. Randal LeBlanc, Deputy Surgeon and Medical Planner, Combined Joint Task Force– Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) discusses the polio vaccine program with medics in the rural city of Hol Hol, as part of the second phase of the Djiboutian Polio Campaign. U.S. Navy photo provided by Cmdr. Randal LeBlanc, CJTF-HOA

USS Howard's Innovative PT Program Improves Sailors Health and PFT Scores

By Journalist 3rd Class Cynthia R. Smith, Fleet Public Affairs Center, Pacific

SAN DIEGO, Ca. - Keeping in line with the Navy's requirements for a lean, fit fleet, the crew aboard USS Howard (DDG 83) has implemented an innovative Physical Training (PT) program. In only four months, the program successfully decreased by half the number of Sailors aboard who are out of weight standards in only four months.

Operations Specialist 1st Class (SW) James Scott said the program's versatility helped him get back into standards.

"We work on the areas of our fitness that need the most attention," said Scott. "Our command has broken up the monotony...which, for me, has been key to getting back in shape and in standards."

When Howard returned from deployment in February, 60 Sailors were participating in the command's Fitness Enhancement Program, which is a program designed to help Sailors maintain the Navy's standards in weight and fitness.

Currently, Howard has reduced that number to 30.

"This is one of the instances where a command has shown success in developing an innovative program tailored to the command's needs while working around an operational schedule," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Terry Scott.

Howard's three-days-a-week PT program includes a 2.6 mile run on Monday; a 45-minute, high cardio, aerobics workout on Wednesday; and an hour-long Captain's Cup-style workout on Friday, where the crew competes against one another in a variety of sports and activities.

"We wanted to make PT part of the workday and part of our healthy lifestyle, but we also needed to find a way to make it fun and interesting for our Sailors," said Cmdr. Carol Hottenrott, Howard's commanding officer. "The new program does just that."

The program requires all hands' participation, except for Sailors on light/limited duty or in that day's duty section. According to Senior

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PACIFIC OCEAN - Cmdr. David Hartzell, Dental Department Head aboard USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), repairs the cavity of a crew member aboard the ship. Reagan is currently underway in the Pacific Ocean conducting Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA). U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate Airman Apprentice Christine Singh

Navy Occupational Health Nurse Program Promotes a Healthy Workplace Environment

By Christine A. Mahoney, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – The Navy's Occupational Health Nurse (OHN) Program provides Sailors and Marines with healthy and safe work environments. The program integrates the best civilian occupational and environmental health trained nurses with Navy Medicine to provide the best in occupational health readiness.

"Our main priority is the health and well-being of our Navy and Marine Corps personnel in the work-

place," said Lori O'Berry, Senior Occupational Health Nurse Consultant, Navy Environmental Health Center (NEHC), Portsmouth, Va. "Whether coping with injuries suffered on the job, work-related stress, or promoting safe work environment practices, our nurses are there to assist with the best medical care possible."

The Navy's OHN Program, established in 1985, is an all-civilian nurse force consisting of 120 nurses. "The Navy does not have any active duty or Reserve OHN nurses; we are an entirely civilian

nurse unit. When a job opens requiring the hiring of an OHN, the Navy will publicize the employment notice," said Berry. "OHNS in the private sector who are interested in working with the Navy must complete the entire application process, which includes a pre-placement exam and an interview, to be considered for a position."

Occupational health professionals must have received their education before entering the Navy civilian work force. "Though the Navy

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Marines Face Non-Lethal Infections During Summer Season

By Sgt. Tracee L. Jackson, II Marine Expeditionary Force

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. - There's a new disease in the Camp LeJeune area that has already claimed over 600 casualties by non-lethal force, and it's hard to spot unless you know what you're looking for.

Infection of bug bites is something every Marine should be aware of when hiking outdoors. With summer in full bloom, Marines should be especially watchful for ticks, mosquitoes and other pests that try

to get under their skin.

"There are several infections that can be transmitted or developed from an ordinary bug bite," warned Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Meliano A. Rivera. "The focus this year is a staph infection called methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), which can develop from any bug bite, cut, scrape or open wound. This type of infection is resistant to normal medications, which is why it's important to get a diagnosis and closely monitor recovery."

He added "If a Marine has a

suspicious bite, they should get a medical evaluation immediately. If possible, save the bug for identification purposes so that we can get a better idea of what you might have."

Anything abnormal isn't something to ignore, said Rivera.

Infections caused by bites, cuts and scrapes are treatable, but it's something to keep in mind before charging into the brush.

"This is basic field hygiene, that any Marine, anywhere in the world should be aware of," said Rivera.

Pensacola Hospital Survives the Wrath of Hurricane Dennis

By Rod Duren, Naval Hospital Pensacola, Public Affairs Office

PENSACOLA, Fla. - Naval Hospital Pensacola sustained only minor damage following a close encounter with Hurricane Dennis and its 125 mph winds. The tightness of the storm's eye – about 20 miles across – and its near-shore wobble to the east of Pensacola averted a second direct-hit hurricane to the facility in the last 10 months.

The hospital, which sustained nearly \$3 million in damages at the hands of Hurricane Ivan nearly 10 months ago, developed some "new leaks and some old leaks," said Capt. Matt Nathan, commanding officer.

"We are in the military healthcare business and as

a result we get ourselves ready for business ahead of all others ... it is the hallmark of what we do," he said. "Those who rely on us truly are grateful in the way we put others first."

"Our facility did well except for some leaks and roof damage, but basically, with the exception of some of our OR capability ... we are full service right now," said Nathan. "I want to salute and recognize all the staff, military and civilian, for their responsiveness and commitment."

The hospital housed nearly 300 people over the weekend for two days under stressful mental conditions, including 12 obstetric patients at 36-plus weeks and their family members. Last fall during Ivan, the staff was onboard for four consecutive days.

Explosive Ordnance Device Corpsman Lends Medical and Combat Experience to the Fight

By Cpl. C. Alex Herron, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq – Hospital Corpsmen are an essential part of an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team, which can deploy at a moments notice. Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jason Hall, with the Marine Wing Support Squadron 271 (MWSS 271) explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team, is ready to provide emergency medical assistance to the team when the situation arises.

"I'm attached to the team as their first line of medical care in the event something goes awry," Hall said. "Our team is on call 24 hours a day. If we get a call at three in the morning we have to go. Our mission is vital to the safety of all service members that may come in contact with an improvised explosive device."

The disposal team has two corpsmen attached to them so they are able to rotate shifts and calls.

"Usually just one of us goes with a portion of the team, but there have been cases when the whole team was called so both of us will accompany them on their mission," said Hall.

Hall joined the squadron and started preparing for this deployment in January 2005. He was selected to work with the EOD team

because of his knowledge and combat experience gained when he supported Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 with 2nd Tank Battalion.

Working with Marines is something Hall has always enjoyed. Hall has loved the camaraderie of Marines from his time as a new corpsman at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C. to currently serving with the MWSS 271 EOD team.

"I think being a corpsman in the Fleet Marine Force is a great way to do a variety of things and advance your knowledge of the field," Hall said. "Especially working with the explosive ordnance disposal team you get to know these Marines on a different level while fulfilling their many missions throughout the country."

The corpsmen attached to explosive ordnance are more than just your average "doc". When responding to a call they may assist the explosives experts in any part of the mission.

"Our corpsmen are an invaluable part of our team," said Gunnery Sgt. Hal White, the disposal team officer-in-charge. "They have the ability to set up and operate any piece of gear we use. They lend a hand to us as well as stay alert to the entire situation in case they need to spring into action. They also carry weapons and provide



AL ASAD, Iraq – Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jason Hall, a corpsman attached to the Marine Wing Support Squadron 271 explosive ordnance disposal team here examines his gear before administering an intravenous injection. Hall is one of two corpsmen permanently attached to EOD for this deployment. U.S. Marine Corps photo by: Cpl. C. Alex Herron, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing

extra security for our vehicles when we travel."

Having a corpsman who has experienced combat and knows how to react when the situation deteriorates is a welcome addition to any team. The knowledge and skills Hall brings to the fight are a standard in Navy Medicine. The Marines whose lives may depend on him are proud to have him alongside during every call.

USS Howard continued...

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Chief Damage Controlman (SW) Cesario Lopez, Howard's command fitness coordinator, holding the crew accountable for their attendance by holding muster each morning has helped make the program successful.

According to Lopez, it was important to create a diverse and interesting program the entire command could participate in.

"Mixing up the format has really helped keep people interested in

the program," said Lopez. "With the help of Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR), we are able provide a different type of workout that has helped a lot of people improve their Physical Fitness Test (PFT) scores."

Christine Young, an MWR aerobics instructor, volunteers her time every Wednesday to help give the crew of Howard a good cardio workout.

"The program helps them increase their fitness levels, coordination, and it adds some cross-training to their program," she said.



SASEBO, Japan – Army Spc. John Reed draws blood from a Navy blood donor during a blood drive held at the Community & Education Center on board U.S. Fleet Activities Sasebo, Japan. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Yesenia Rosas

Divers Practice Life-Saving Skills During Annual Exercise

From Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/Commander, U.S. 5th Fleet Public Affairs Office

SEYCHELLES, Indian Ocean - During a 10-day exercise known as Island Response 2005, divers from two U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) units and the Seychelles Coast Guard Dive Unit discussed one of the most critical aspects of their jobs, dive medicine.

"Divers must know what is going on inside their bodies, what is going on while diving," said Cpl. Steve Nourice of the Seychelles Coast Guard. "Medicine is part of the diving module that divers must know."

Damage Control Senior Chief (DSW/MDV) Mike Lutz, master diver from EOD Mobile Unit 4 in Bahrain, led the dive medicine phases of the training. He described dive sickness symptoms, outlined appropriate responses and treatments and emphasized the risks and dire consequences if divers don't strictly follow proper dive procedures and regulations.

"All the divers are trained in the medical aspects so they can recognize symptoms to react properly and treat symptoms accordingly," he said.

During Island Response, the combined teams talked about decompression sickness; what happens when a diver surfaces too quickly or stays at depth too long. Symptoms range from weakness, pain in the joints or unconsciousness. This can result in death if not treated properly and quickly.

"The most important thing in diving accidents is to act as quickly as possible. The earlier the treatment is initiated, the better," said Dr. Susan Fock Tave, an ear, nose and throat surgeon at Victoria Hospital in Seychelles who has a diploma in dive medicine. "Treatment not only means decompression. It means proper handling of the casualty at the site of the accident."

As part of the exercise, Seychelles and U.S. divers conducted dive casualty drills using a portable dive chamber. Lutz brought the chamber from Bahrain.

Participants took turns simulating dive-related ailments. The combined team of divers then conducted neurological exams before making a determination if the situation called for the use of the chamber.

"We do neurological exams throughout the diagnosis, looking for neurological deficits. We check the diver's mental status, reflexes, coordination, sensory perception, strength and cranial nerves," said Lutz.

After determining the nature of the complaints and if the chamber is necessary, the master diver will decide whether to employ the dive chamber. In the Island Response training, he does.

Once inside, another neurological exam was administered, and the diver was placed on pure oxygen and "returned to depth," in order to treat the dive-induced complication.

Although a military exercise, Fock Tave believes local fishermen, dive enthusiasts and tourists can benefit from the lessons learned during this annual exercise.

Occupational Health Nurse continued...

(Continued from page 3)

does not have a formal occupational health education program, OHNs can network with one another to keep on top of the latest innovations in our nursing field," said

Kathy Edwards, Head of Occupational Health, Naval Medical Center, San Diego, Ca. "Nurses can also get in touch with NEHC, which has a few nurses dedicated to keeping up on current field trends and educational training."

OHNs are stationed throughout the world, but do not deploy.

"Though we do not deploy and are not on the front lines of combat, we do take care of the pre- and post-deployment process," said O'Berry.

She added "We want to make certain that our service members and civilian personnel, whether deploying or working on the home front, are physically and mentally prepared for that mission. We also want them to return home in the best condition possible."



BALTIMORE, Md. - Chief Hospital Corpsman Ken Montgomery, assigned to the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), explains the 1.5 mile running course to Delayed Entry Personnel (DEP) from Navy Recruiting District Philadelphia. The Navy's newest recruits took part in a physical fitness test as part of their "Day in the Navy" program. Since the program started in March 2005, no NRD Philadelphia DEP members have dropped out of the Navy. *U.S. Navy photo by Chief Journalist Monica Hallman*



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